

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend the specification as follows:

[0030] Although the halogen-rich region 34 may not decrease the number of defects found in the silicon dioxide/silicon interface between STI boundaries 32a and the substrate 14, the halogen-rich region 34 reduces ~~will prevent~~ the effects of current generation or current leakage found in conventional pixel cells (described above with respect to FIG. 1). The halogen-rich region 34 acts to compensate the charge associated with dangling bonds or broken bonds near the silicon dioxide/silicon interface. By compensating for the charge associated with the dangling bonds, the resulting pixel cell 100 has decreased current generation and/or current leakage and, therefore, suppressed dark current.